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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00
CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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O R 280849Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5388
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6326

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR MASS KS US
SUBJ: FONMIN BRIEFS ASSEMBLY GROUP ON RESULTS OF SCM

REF: A. SEOUL 6231, B. SEOUL 6284

SUMMARY: PRESS AND GENERAL PUBLIC REACTION TO SCM, CARTER LETTER, AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE REMAINS POSITIVE AND UPBEAT, AS DO PRIVATE COMMENTS OF ROKG OFFICIALS AND OTHERS. FONMIN BRIEFED ASSEMBLY'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WHICH USED OCCASION TO ASK ROKG TOUGH, HARD QUESTIONS ON THEIR VARIOUS CONCERNS INCLUDING WORKING OF COMMUNIQUE, NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND OTHER RELATED POINTS. OPPOSITION MEMBER PRESENT CLAIMS, HOWEVER, THAT QUESTIONS WERE TOUGH TO ELICIT CLEAR AND DETAILED GOVERNMENT RESPONSE, AND N.A. MEMBERS' VIEWS NOT AS NEGATIVE AS QUESTIONS MAY HAVE IMPLED.

1. ON JULY 28, FONMIN PAK TONG-CHIN BRIEFED AN "EXPANDED" NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE INCLUDING NDP'S YI CHOL-SUNG AND OTHER SENIOR ASSEMBLYMAN ON ROKG VIEW OF SCN, PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER, AND RESULTING JOINT COMMUNIQUE.
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ASSEMBLYMEN INTENSIVELY PURSUED USSUES OF COMPENSATORY MEASURES, PURPORED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "PROMPT" VERSUS "IMMEDIATE" U.S. RESPONSE IN CASE OF ATTACH, AND QUESTION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR SUPPORT. OTHER CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY BOTH RULING AND OPPOSITION MEMBERS CONCERNED PERENNIAL QUESTION OF PRC AND SOVIET POSITION VIS-A-VIS NORTH KOREAN ADVENTURISM, AND ABILITY OF U.S. TO PROVIDE SUPPORT PROMISED, GIVEN OUR

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CONSTITUTIONAL AND CONGRESSIONAL CONSTRAINTS. ALTHOUGH
PRESS AND OTHER PUBLIC REACTION REMAINS UPBEAT AND POSITIVE,
YU CHONG-HOE'S PAIK TU-CHIN AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN CHOE YONG-HUI BOTH CONFIDED TO CHARGE' THAT THIS
COMMITTEE SESSION MAY NOT HAVE DONE MUCH TO ALLAY THESE CONCERNS.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND, NDP ASSEMBLYMAN O SE-UNG, WHO WAS
PRESENT, TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE AND OTHERS HAD TRIED TO
INTRODUCE HARD, TOUGH QUESTIONS TO ELICIT COMPREHENSIVE AND
HOPEFULLY FRANK ANSWERS. IN NDP'S CASE, THIS WAS ALSO GOOD
TACTIC TO BURNISH NDP'S PERENNIALLY TARNSIHED IMAGE AS "REAL"
OPPOSITION. O ASSERTED THAT EVEN RULING PARTY MEMBERS TOOK
SESSION AS OPPORTUNTIY TO GET CLEAR, CONCISE ANSWERS FROM
GOVERNMENT. O INDICATED THAT IN MAIN HE WAS NOT ALLTHAT
UNHAPPY WITH SCM.

3. KOREA HEARLD HEADLINED "CLOSED SESSION", PROMINENTLY
QUOTING COMMITTEE SHOURCE THAT FONMIN HAD SAID "IF COMPENSATORY
MEASURES ARE NOT CARRIED OUT EVEN IN PARALLEL WITH INITIAL
PULLOUT OF AMERICAN GROUND TROOPS AS MAINTAINED BY WASHINGTON
DUE TO SITUATION IN CONGRESS, PROBLEM WILL DESERVE "RESTUDY".
ON WHOLE, HOWEVER, PRESS REACTION CONTINUES TO PRAISE SCM
RESULTS, NOTING INTER ALIA THAT MUTUAL COMPROMISES WERE
HAMMERED OUT TO GENERAL SATISFACTION OF BOTH SIDES.

4. SOURCES WITHIN MOFA HAVE NOT ONLY TOLD PRESS THEY WERE
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PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF SCM, BUT HAVE ALSO RELAYED SIMILAR
INFORMATION TO AMERICANS. JAPANESE EMBOFF HAS TOLD US THAT
HIS EMBASSY REPORTED TO TOKYO THAT KOREAN REACTION TO TALKS WAS
GENERALLY FAVORABLE AND THAT CONSULTATIVE PROESS WAS
BENEFICIAL WITH POSITIVE GIVE AND TAKE EVIDENT ON BOTH SIDES.
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